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## **CASEY: Judge denies convicted neo-Nazi's bid for 'compassionate release.'**

Remember Bill White, the West End slumlord and neo-Nazi who went to prison for threatening a whole bunch of people? A federal judge in Roanoke recently thwarted his bid for early release.

Dan Casey  
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**A**pril 20 seems a bit more important this year for at least two reasons. First, it's the international holiday celebrating everything surrounding marijuana. For Virginia weed devotees, there's plenty of reason to rejoice.

Last year, the Virginia General Assembly decriminalized possession of up to an ounce. After July 1, 2020, that became a civil infraction akin to a parking ticket. Beginning this July 1, possession of small amounts of pot will be fully legal for people 21 and over. (Legal sales of recreational weed in Virginia remain on the horizon, slated for 2024.)

The other reason the date's remarkable is somewhat of a buzzkill. It's the birthday of Adolf Hitler, perhaps the most evil person in human history. Which makes it an appropriate day to note that Roanoke neo-Nazi William A. White will spend another 16 years in federal prison.

This I learned earlier this month from an order handed down by U.S. District Judge Elizabeth Dillon in Roanoke. On April 5, she denied White's request for compassionate release from a 30-year sentence.

That stemmed from convictions based on White's threats to a Florida-based federal judge and a U.S. Attorney as well as some others.

Previously, White had been convicted of threatening his ex-wife, several tenants in apartments he owned in Roanoke, a bank employee and a college administrator at the University of Delaware.

Prior to those convictions, White was found guilty in federal court in Illinois of intimidating a juror in a federal trial of another white supremacist, Matthew Hale. (Hale's serving 40 years for encouraging an FBI informant to kill a federal judge, who had ruled against him in an unrelated trademark lawsuit.)

White used to celebrate this day. In 2008, he and some other self-styled Nazis gathered in a hotel ballroom in Chicago to mark the 119th anniversary of Hitler's birth. For that occasion, White and some others donned khakis, black shirts and red, swastika-emblazoned armbands.

They even even posed for a photo at the event. In that picture, White had his right arm raised in a "Sieg Heil!" salute, beneath a Hitler portrait someone had thoughtfully hung on the ballroom wall.

That happened a few months before White published a magazine cover featuring then-Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama, in advance of an Obama campaign stop in Roanoke. It depicted Obama's head surrounded by a sharpshooter's gun sight cleverly fashioned as a swastika. The headline was, "Kill this [N-word]?"

White's now incarcerated at the federal penitentiary in Marion, Illinois. It used to be a federal "supermax" prison, reserved for the most dangerous and unrepentant criminals, such as the late Mafia boss John Gotti. But now it's a medium-security facility.

But let's get back to White's request for compassionate release. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, that's resulted in the freeing of a number of federal prison inmates, including at least one convicted in Kansas in 2003 who was serving two life terms without parole.

Oddly, neither White's 20-page motion for compassionate release, nor a 97-page document he filed along with it, mention the terms COVID-19, pandemic or coronavirus.

Instead, White argues, he should be released because "torture" he's suffered at the hands of the Bureau of Prisons has caused him severe mental illness, including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), psychotic breaks, paranoid delusions and bouts of catatonia.

One of the latter, White argued, caused "an inability to eat or drink that led to my near death from dehydration June 23, 2014."

"I will continue to be at risk of relapse to the most severe symptoms and to suffer disability my entire life," White wrote, acting as his own attorney. "The [Bureau of Prisons] is being medically negligent in failing to diagnose and treat my injuries ... Most disabling at the moment are the attacks of paranoia."

The most recent "paranoid delusional episode" White cited occurred on July 29, 2020.

Whether White intended it or not, a 97-page companion document he authored appears loaded with evidence of paranoia.

In one passage, White wrote about his psychologically scarred upbringing after his parents moved to what White called "an almost entirely Judaic neighborhood" in Montgomery County, Maryland, when he was a child.

"My family and I were subject to violence, particularly by our neighbors ... because we did not practice Judaism. Our house was egged. Threatening notes were left on our door, telling us to leave the neighborhood."

In another passage, White wrote: "Basically, Judaism is the religion of the Devil, and its spread is part of the Devil's plan to enslave and exterminate the human race, the United States also having been created for that purpose."

In another part of the document, White wrote, "I do not believe Negroes are human."

It also makes reference to “waking dreams,” “space aliens,” novelist H.P. Lovecraft; Satanism; former Congressman Ron Paul; pioneering White House correspondent Sarah McClendon; the CIA; the Department of Homeland Security; a Russian military-intelligence agency and various attempts by the FBI to frame him for crimes.

At one point White wrote “the FBI thinks I’m gay,” to which he quickly added, “I’m not and never have been.” At another point, he wrote “women are always hitting on me.”

And what about that party in honor of Hitler that White attended in Chicago on April 20, 2008? In the document, he offered that he later realized it was “a fake, FBI-sponsored ‘Hitler’s birthday party.’”

In a six-page order entered April 5, Dillon denied White’s bid for compassionate release.

The judge specifically disputed White’s claim that torture-caused mental illnesses have left him unable to care for himself in prison. And she cited exhibits White provided as evidence.

“The most recent report from a psychologist in 2019 states that White was ‘pleasant,’ ‘forthcoming,’ and his hygiene was ‘acceptable by jail standards,’” Dillon wrote. “His ‘thought processes, attention and concentration appeared to be normal,’ and there were ‘no apparent signs of psychosis.’”

To that, the judge added: “Even if the court found that extraordinary and compelling reasons existed in this case, the court would nonetheless exercise its discretion to deny the motion. White has a long history of threatening behavior ... Continued incarceration is also necessary to protect the public from further crimes and to promote adequate deterrence.”

Bravo to the judge for that.

Dillon’s order also noted that White’s projected release date falls in 2037. Coincidentally, that happens to be the same year fellow convict Matthew Hale is scheduled to be released. They’re both incarcerated at the penitentiary in Marion.

In the best-case scenario, perhaps White and Hale will be freed prior to April 20 that year. Then they can celebrate Hitler's birthday over a beer in some rathskeller.

Or maybe with big fat joint of legal weed.



White

The Roanoke Times, File 2008

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Contact metro columnist Dan Casey at 981-3423 or **[dan.casey@roanoke.com](mailto:dan.casey@roanoke.com)**. Follow him on Twitter:.

### Dan Casey

Dan Casey knows a little bit about a lot of things but not a heck of a lot about most things. That doesn't keep him from writing about them, however. So keep him honest!